

# FINAL REPORT

INTERNATIONAL LIFELINE

CA PDC0801A00108400

FY 1993

DECEMBER 30, 1993

## A) PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

During 1992, IL's PL480 Title II programming in Haiti was carried out under the emergency HUMANITARIAN FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, which was published in final form by USAID/HAITI on 31 December, 1991. IL's Program Plan for FY92 was in response to this initiative. In August, 1992, IL submitted a request for a no-cost extension in order to fulfill the grant agreement, including such items as consultant services. First, we received verbal approval by USAID (Chief GDO) to proceed to spend these remaining funds as soon as possible. Then, she reversed this decision. From October 1, 1992, to January 21, 1993, IL could not utilize any of this funding for the stated purposes.

USAID/Haiti withheld written approval of the no-cost extension of this grant for 5 1/2 months.

In FY93, the funds remaining in this grant were extended to provide for renovations and equipment for IL's Haiti office.

The original PAG was signed prior to the military coup of 30 September, 1991, and its stated objective was to:

"Create accountable, effective umbrella arrangements and management systems including inter-organizational agreements; financial, personnel, management information and planning systems; and training plans in support of an enlarged program."

The post coup emergency supervened and, with USAID + AID/W permission, this PAG with its several amendments increasing funding, was used as a vehicle for starting emergency food programming under terms of the HFAP referred to above.

A bridge funding grant was subsequently added and was simply to provide additional funding to supplement and extend the ongoing emergency feeding program, which commenced in April, 1992.

The overriding objective of both grants was to use PL480 commodities in order to:

"[R]educe deaths and suffering due to crisis-induced hunger in populations at risk. These populations are defined as pregnant and lactating mothers, children under 10 years of age, orphans, the sick, and the institutionalized."

## **B) PROGRAM BENCHMARKS**

IL had almost no experience in PL480 reporting systems prior to FY92. Accordingly the benchmark initially for the Planning Assistance Grant was to have created and installed suitable food and financial management systems, sufficient to justify the signing of a first MYOP for commencing regular PL480 Title II programming in FY93.

The coup and sequential crisis both interrupted and accelerated this schedule, and emergency food programming was started under the aegis of an IL program plan for urban and peri-urban areas of Port-au-Prince, with consequent increases in the dollar and local currency funding under the PAG. The Bridge Finance Grant # CA 521-0000-A-00-2005-00, May 16, 1992 to December 15, 1992, enabled IL to increase the beneficiary load, and expand geographically to the Island of La Gonave and to Jean Rebel in the North.

The input target requested by USAID was accordingly to provide average rations of 1800 k/cals per day to 75,000 recipients, with build-up as fast as possible from program commencement. The output target was essentially the consumption of the set ration of food by the individual members of the target beneficiary groups.

A crucial benchmark for program operations was the preparedness of the Recipient Agencies in IL's umbrella group to receive food. IL worked with the management committees of the various NGO to inculcate quickly the levels of knowledge sufficient to get the feeding operations under way while maintaining suitable controls and reporting procedures.

This process of strengthening institutional capabilities was described in the Program Description in IL's Planning Assistance Grant as:

"Individual meetings and mini-workshops to ensure agreement and broad understanding on roles and responsibilities".

At the completion of this process IL reviewed the state of knowledge and preparedness of the various NGO committees, and determined that only 15, later increased to 16, of the 24 were ready to start operations. Establishing this threshold of capability to proceed was important, since if all 24 had been given a pro-forma certification of readiness, program quality would have been markedly inferior to the level which was achieved.

## **C) PROGRAM PROGRESS/ CONSTRAINTS**

Food deliveries commenced in April, and by end-September an input food volume sufficient for 107,000 individuals was being distributed monthly, equivalent to more than 140% of output target. IL continued to receive more requests for food, both for augmentation of the ongoing programs at approved NGOs, and to add additional organizations. However the quantities of food made available to IL were not sufficient to go any higher, and new applications were not accepted after 22 June. Thus IL has achieved substantially more than the input target set at the start of FY92 PL480 operations in April.

Aside from food availability, two principle constraints were (a), the highly compressed time frame, and, (b) the slow receipt of funds by IL. In the ordinary course of events IL would have used the original PAG to develop a comprehensive structure of systems for the management of both food and money. In the event exigencies of the post coup emergency period required what one management consultant described as a "can do" approach, embodied in an "informal and ad hoc style used to advantage." In sum, IL delivered the food effectively, as required by the demands of the crisis situation, and USAID's and the country's needs, but without having fully regularized data collection and documentation.

Slow receipt of funds was a continuing problem, consuming scarce management time simply in finding money for day to day operations. (It should be noted as well that the exigencies of managing two other USAID grants, for central warehouse management on behalf of all of the four Cooperating Sponsors, and the development of a process for Title II Monetization, also bore very heavily on the available quantity of senior management at IL).

The budgets themselves were adequate, but again the need for haste in starting to deliver food to hungry people outran the adequacy of the embryo systems for invoicing USAID and reporting on disbursements. Food was received faster than funds.

A final constraint, one shared by all of the other American PVOs in Haiti, is the difficulty inherent in logistics operations outside of immediate urban and peri-urban PAP. IL's delivery system around PAP was set up rapidly, and worked very efficiently. But the addition, at USAID request, of the Island of La Gonave and the Northern area of Jean Rabel added inescapable transportation problems characteristic of the rural parts of Haiti.

But progress and achievements have been considerable and palpable. IL has capitalized on its long experience working with a widely diversified set of organic indigenous groups to rapidly establish "wet" feeding centers, plus the appropriate mechanisms for the distribution of dry rations to mothers. Established relationships have been improved by IL's capability to efficiently deliver a valuable resource in a timely manner. IL has encouraged the local NGOs to formally establish themselves with the government, and then, with this prerequisite accomplished, to register with USAID/HAITI.

While regular full meetings of the IL Umbrella Group of Participating Sponsors would not start until FY93, IL has successfully trained the local groups in the essential skills of food management.

The DATEX Management Assessment consultant retained by USAID, who spent several weeks in-country in September, and visited some 17 feeding sites, praised IL's "highly pragmatic and action-oriented" style in his report, as well as their "bottom up" approach. The Haitian NGOs demonstrated appreciation and responsibility by providing transportation funding for their food allotments out of their own resources.

IL has put multiple strategies into effect for overcoming the described constraints. For example the following well qualified consultants spent a number of person months in-country, mostly in the last few months of the FY:

- |    |                   |                       |
|----|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) | Emily Moore       | Plan preparation      |
| 2) | Lawrence Barbieri | Plan preparation      |
| 3) | Mike Dwyer        | Monetization          |
| 4) | Ray Cramer        | Financial systems     |
| 5) | Edward Glaeser    | Management assessment |

IL planned to continue to obtain expert advice in FY93. Dwyer and Cramer continued their work until January. A highly experienced food manager was brought in at IL's expense to assist with the preparation of the FY92 annual report, and to provide guidance in installing systems. Two Planning Assistance consultants came in mid January for an extended period to train IL's field inspectors and food monitors. Detailed job descriptions for all personnel were prepared, job titles revised, and an organogram prepared.

In sum IL was keenly aware of USAID concerns about having perhaps come too far too fast, and energetically tried to install, institutionalize, and implement sound management systems, while continuing to build on its already successful pattern of close cooperation with the Haitian NGOs.

The signing of IL's first MYOP in August, to run through the end of FY95, was a cogent indicator of the continuing mutually beneficial relationship with USAID.

#### **D) LOGISTICS OPERATIONS**

Food arrivals did run late at one point in the third quarter, presenting a problem and resulting in delaying program expansion toward the intermediate beneficiary target of 75,000. There is however no indication that this problem was chronic. Central food storage, after discharge from the port, was very good both at IL's own warehouse, and also at the central warehouse which IL has managed on behalf of itself and the other three American PVOs. The DATEX consultant described IL's central warehouse management as "superb".

In-country transportation constraints outside of PAP peri-urban, perhaps especially to and on the Island of La Gonave, will recur as an embedded problem of the Haitian environment, which only continuous diligence and application will continue to ameliorate. On the other hand numerous visits by IL field inspectors, and by consultants as well, revealed a perhaps surprisingly good level of storage facilities in the field, both at the central headquarters of the 16 NGO recipient agencies, and also at the nearly 300 individual feeding centers.

## **E) OTHER ISSUES**

### **a) Targeting Strategies**

The targeting strategy in this emergency situation has essentially been to maintain minimum calorie intakes in the affected population, as determined by the USAID HFAP, based on accepted international norms. It appears to have been sound.

### **b) Appropriateness of Ration**

As noted above, the 1800 k/cal ration is an appropriate international standard for a food emergency determined to be likely to exceed 90 days duration. The nutritional and palatability mix was enhanced by the inclusion of dried peas.

### **c) Components Other Than Food**

- \* Training was directly and exclusively related to food management and accountability.
- \* Growth monitoring was not incorporated into this emergency program; however USAID has an ongoing nutrition and health monitoring operation, which publishes periodic "Humanitarian Situation Reports".
- \* Information systems were improved from a pre-emergency zero base.

### **d) Adequacy of Funding/ Manpower**

- \* Host Government. Not a significant factor in this program.
- \* Donors. USAID budgets were ample; actual release of funds sometimes delayed. USAID staff were interactive; and various consultants were provided.
- \* IL. Contributed substantial funding from its own resources

### **e) Focus & Concentrate**

This world wide AID/W approach to program and project portfolio pruning and rationalization has not been an important consideration in the post-coup environment in

Haiti. USAID continues to emphasize humanitarian efforts, and above all emergency food programming, to the exclusion of all else.

f) Beneficiary Involvement

As shown above, IL has institutionalized a "bottom up" approach to programming during the decade and most of its pre-PL480 experience is in Haiti. The nature of the program, the food mix, and the ration were essentially determined by USAID, in consultation with PVO management.

From that point on however, IL characteristically relied on its established umbrella of local NGOs, and such operational functions as the selection of beneficiaries, choice of site, employment of cooks and food handlers, security arrangements, and so on were all carried out at community level. Members of the NGO governing committees assisted and facilitated this community based process; and again as noted above, made important cash and in-kind contributions to the program from their own limited resources.

g) Linkage to Food Security Policy

In FY92 the emergency program essentially WAS the food security policy.

**F) BUDGET**

All financial reports, including final financial reports, have been submitted to A.I.D./Washington. Also, remaining unused funds were returned at the time of submission of the final financial reports.

**G) EVALUATIONS/ AUDITS**

There has not been an AID/IG audit of this program.

The following assessments and informal evaluations took place in FY92:

- \* DOD contract auditors made a "pre-award survey" in July, 1992. This was pre-conditional to the MYOP Cooperating Agreement signed with AID in August.
- \* Ray Cramer, assisted by a DATEX consultant, reviewed financial procedures at IL's home office in Oklahoma City, also as part of the "pre-award" preparation.
- \* Edward Glaeser, another DATEX consultant, visited Haiti in September, 1992, and prepared a "Management Assessment".
- \* Cramer started an extensive consultancy in PAP in September, and not only assessed financial control and reporting procedures, but has also installed a comprehensive new system.

\* Mike Dwyre, an experienced food manager and former FFP Officer, started a six months consultancy in-country in August, 1992. While his primary task was to create procedures for a commodity Monetization system, inherent in this job has been the provision of a great deal of advice on management procedures and data collection techniques for PL480 programming.

USAID inspectors have also made a number of visits to feeding sites, but very little formal presentation of their findings was made to IL.

As has been extensively discussed elsewhere in this report, IL believed it was dealing constructively with USAID's concerns about improvements in program management, especially augmenting the professional staff.

#### **H) MYOP MODIFICATIONS**

Not applicable, since IL's first MYOP was signed only on 8/31/92, and programming under it had not commenced as of the end of FY92, because of the emergency.

#### **I) DATA COLLECTION SYSTEM**

IL's DCS, as of the end of the FY, might cogently be described, as it was by an expert observer, as "energetic and complete at the feeding center level, but unsystematic in aggregating and reporting". Some background:

As has been described above, IL's Planning Assistance Grant was signed on 9/06/91, just three weeks before the military coup in Haiti which has brought on the present emergency situation and humanitarian response. When USAID requested IL's Director, on his own return to PAP in January, 1992, to start immediate emergency food programming, there had been no time for an orderly and measured "learning curve" for IL in PL480 operations.

It should perhaps be re-emphasized that prior to FY92, IL had a very minimal experience in managing PL480 Title II commodities, and this only as a recipient of food from ADRA in 1987/89, although IL has a long history in Haiti of health care and other community based development activities.

IL was not a USAID Cooperating Sponsor during the period food was received from ADRA, and commodity quantities and beneficiary levels were at a very low level, the latter no more than 13,000 at the maximum. IL received only food -- no funding, no training, and no supervision. ADRA's requirements for reporting were meager, and IL was at no time asked to provide anything like the array of systems which would be expected of a regular Cooperating Sponsor. IL's only other experience with food was very briefly as a recipient of Section 416 surplus commodities in 1984, again without significant reporting requirements.

Thus when IL was asked, in January 1992, to expedite the start up of PL480 Title II operations, the organization's institutional experience in food was virtually a blank slate. So from January to the start of food distributions in April, IL proceeded energetically to gather information on food management from every available source: fellow PVOs, Food Aid Management in Washington, other organizations, and written material, including such key AID documents as Handbook 9, plus Regulation 11, as revised and updated through May 7, 1992.

A thorough recording system was developed at recipient level, with blue cards for each school child beneficiary of the daily wet feeding program at the community level canteens; and pink cards for mothers receiving a weekly dry ration to take home for themselves and two younger children. These cards record a one month period by punching out dates around the borders.

The responsables for the canteens then compile their monthly reports, which are sent directly to IL's central office in PAP. The raw material of data collection is thus quite comprehensive.

In conclusion IL believes that it performed acceptably in the crisis atmosphere surrounding this period in Haiti's history.